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## THE RECENT CHANGES IN THE LIFE AND SOCIETY OF THE CENTRAL KALAHARI SAN

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**ABSTRACT** Sedentarization of the Central Kalahari San, a hunting-gathering people, is in progress following the introduction of school, medical clinic, stable water supply, etc. to their habitat. This paper describes the changes in hunting and gathering activities, residential patterns, and distribution of meat among individuals due to these introduced impacts, and analyzes the people's reactions to the modernization reflected in the coexistence of traditional egalitarianism and introduced monetary economics, the conflicting old and new value systems, and the changes of social maintenance mechanisms due to the concentration of population.

The concentration of about 500 people at one settlement resulted in the disappearance of vegetable foods around the settlement and the gathering activities became inefficient and infrequent. Also the hunting field became distant, and, in place of the former solitary bow-and-arrow hunting, equestrian hunting by means of horses and donkeys became popular. The inflow of monetary economics, change of hunting methods, and concentration of population induced a great change in the distribution of meat in spite of little change in the per capita supply of meat. Although there coexist the traditional value system and the introduced value system in various perspectives, the people selectively imbibe the introduced culture, and integrate it into a new culture of their own. However, the present state is transitional, and there are many problems.

**Key Words:** hunter-gatherers, ecology, acculturation, social changes.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

After the Age of Geographical Discoveries starting in the 15th century, exchanges between different peoples became universal phenomena. Even so-called 'primitive societies' were exposed to civilization, and their traditional lifestyles and cultures were greatly affected. In the 20th century, the affected areas have become global and the velocity of changes has been accelerated to the level inducing qualitative alterations.

This paper deals with the recent changes in life and society of the Central Kalahari San, a traditionally hunting-gathering people. The changes in the San society have continued ceaselessly since its formation. Generally there are two types of changes: changes due to internal factors and those due to external factors. The former types of changes result from internal discoveries, inventions, technical innovations, accumulated modifications and deviations generation after generation, or increase/decrease of populations. On the other hand, the latter are usually brought by encounters with different cultures. In reality both are intermingled and both involve the actual changes. It is said that less than one tenth of societies can create a new culture with discoveries and innovations of its own. In most cases, a culture changes under influences of others. This kind of unilateral cultural change due to external factors is called 'acculturation.'

Acculturation in the San society is nothing new. It started in the 17th century, at the latest, when encounters with Europeans and Bantu peoples began, and has lasted ceaselessly since

then. The San, who had once spread over a large area stretching from south Africa to east Africa, now limit their distribution to south Africa. Some of them through hybridization and cultural amalgamation with Bantu peoples adopted pastoral lifestyle and social systems and have probably turned to be the Khoi Khoi (Hottentot). These facts suggest that the San's acculturation in contact with Bantu peoples may have started as early as in the 5th century.

The San, who had withdrawn by the 15th century to the area designated by the present South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola, were further affected by the waves of southern migration of the Nguni and Sotho Bantu peoples as well as by the immigration of the Dutch people who started to invade the area in the 17th century. The process was nothing but a history of repeated invasion and persecution. In Namibia, the San were oppressed by the Ovambo and the Herero, who separately took westerly routes to south. In this invasion process, many of the San were integrated into the invaders or wiped out, and only a small number of people escaped in the Kalahari Desert stretching in Botswana and Namibia. The number of survivors up until the 20th century is estimated to be 50,000–60,000. Out of these survivors, most have been deprived of their lands and lead a life dependent on immigrated white and Bantu peoples. Only about 5,000 of them are still hunter-gatherers as were their ancestors.

Those who have maintained their traditional lifestyle have lived in seclusion in remote areas. Even among such people, however, the northern group, !Kung, studied by R. B. Lee and I. DeVore came to lead a symbiotic life with the Herero (Lee, 1979), and the southern

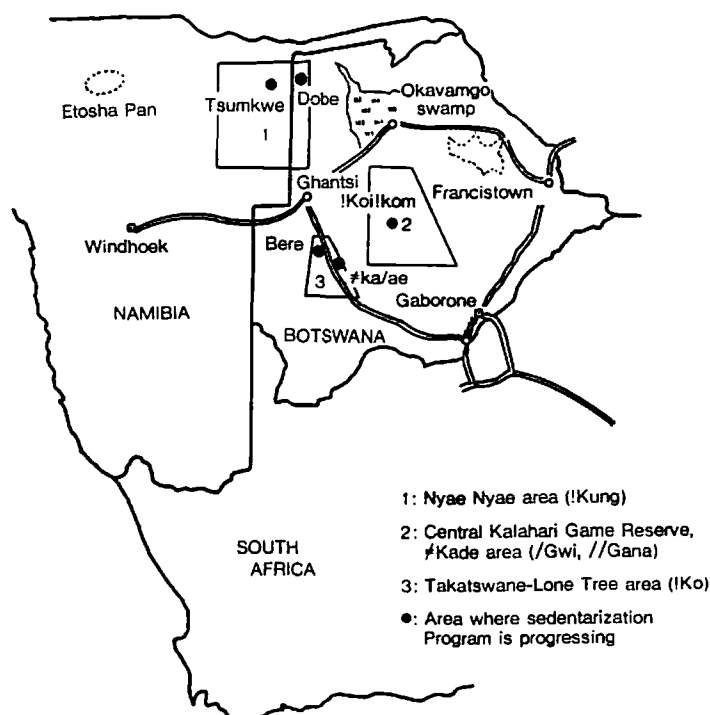


Fig. 1. The San's habitats and the areas where sedentarization program is in progress.

group. !Ko, studied by H. J. Heinz have led a life dependent on roadside boreholes since a highway (though dirt road) was opened between Ghantsi and Lobatse in the 1950's (Heinz, 1972). Nevertheless, before 1960, there were areas such as ≠Kade in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (including the above two groups' areas; hereafter, 'Reserve') and Etosha Pan in Namibia, where people still led a life 100% dependent on hunting and gathering (Fig. 1). In particular, since ≠Kade area was announced to be part of the Reserve in the 1960's, the inhabitants led a completely self-dependent hunting-gathering life (Silberbauer, 1981). A few exceptional people were the Kgalagadi, a branch of the Sotho Bantu Tswana, who had entered the area for hunting since olden days, and those who had mixed ancestories with them. Some of the mixed descendants raised goats and practiced a small-scale cultivation. Also some inhabitants traveled once or twice a year to a Bantu village 150 km away for visits and trade. Though rare, some even went to gold mines in South Africa to work as laborers. Thus they were never completely secluded from the outside world.

Finally in the 1970's, these areas came to be directly exposed to the outside civilization. The recent changes have been intentionally promoted by the government and Christian missions for the life improvement of the people living in remote areas. Although Etosha Pan and the adjacent areas were pronounced to be a national park in the 1960's, the Namibian government, with support from South Africa and religious missions, promoted sedentarization in the region.

In Botswana, in 1974, Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) was initiated by the Ministry of Local Government and Land. RADP aims to improve the living of all peoples inhabiting remote areas including the San. By this program, facilities for school education, medical care, and water supplies were built at several places in their habitats. The San's habitats were also included in the program, and their sedentarization by the external pressure rapidly progressed.

The series of changes was delayed to arrive in ≠Kade area until 1979 because ≠Kade was in the center of the Reserve. It took place there as a series of one-sided interventions by the government and other external groups and the inhabitants' reactions to them. First let us review how the external impacts were, and then let us analyze how they affected the inhabitants' lifestyle, residential pattern, idea of values, and behavior patterns.

## EXTERNAL IMPACTS

### 1979

*Construction of boreholes and stable water supply:* In 1962, under the instruction of G. B. Silberbauer, then governmental investigator of the San, five test holes were bored in a 50 × 50 kilometer square in ≠Kade area. The borehole at !Koi!kom, having water with the lowest salinity among the five holes, was installed with a diesel engine pump. However, this borehole was only temporarily used by governmental people and anthropologists on the occasions of investigations. Except for those who happened to be there at the time, most inhabitants were not benefited from this hole. They did not have chances to find surface water except for the after-rain pools in the rainy season found on 40–50 days a year. This borehole was improved in 1979, and pump keepers were employed from the inhabitants. Thus it became a source of stable water supply.

*Establishment of an RADP office:* A branch office of RADP was built near the borehole. Its building was a cylindrical cabin roofed with corrugated iron sheets. An office staff came

to be permanently stationed there, and a radio set with an antenna and solar batteries was installed for fixed time and emergency communication.

*Agricultural consultation:* As mentioned above, some people began a small-scale cultivation for a short period in the rainy season: they planted watermelon, maize, and beans. Following the stable water supply, spread of agriculture was promoted. Agricultural consultants were sent, three sets of plows to be pulled by several donkeys were introduced, and free seeds of maize, sorghum, and beans were distributed.

*Introduction of school education:* As part of the sedentarization policy, a teacher was sent and school education was started. In the beginning there was no school building. Special delivery of maize flour was started for schoolchildren.

*Introduction of hunting license system:* There had been no actual restriction on the hunting by the San living in the Reserve, although giraffes, lions, leopards, etc. were prohibited to hunt. In 1979, a hunting license system, though perfunctory, was introduced. Every adult man received a license in which the number of each game species permitted to hunt a year (Table 1) and the species prohibited to hunt (giraffe, lion, leopard, cheetah, brown hyena, and Kori bustard) were stated.

*Organization of a folk-art buying company:* Botswana Craft Company, a half-governmental half-private organization for folk-art trade, was established. The company people came to ≠Kade area a few times a year, and provided the ≠Kade inhabitants with opportunities to obtain cash income.

*Free distribution of clothes:* Used clothes sent as aid goods from foreign countries were distributed, and replaced the traditional skin loincloth, skirt, and shoulder strap. Only a few old men still wear skin loincloths.

## 1982

*Construction of buildings:* Construction of six concrete-block buildings for the school, medical clinic, RADP office, schoolteachers' houses was begun in 1982, and completed in 1983. Many ≠Kade inhabitants obtained cash income by becoming construction laborers. On the other hand, the inflow of strangers, such as construction engineers, laborers from Ghantsi, and drivers, much confused the economic system of ≠Kade area.

Table 1. The number of each game permitted to hunt per adult man per year, stated in the hunting license.

Game species	No. permitted to hunt
Gemsbok	2
Eland	1
Kudu	1
Wildebeest	4
Hartebeest	4
Springbok	4
Steenbok	30
Bush duiker	30
Warthog	3
Bat-eared fox	50
Genet	50
Caracal	10
Wild cat	50
Silver fox	10
Monitor lizard	10
Ostrich	2

*Distribution of aid goods:* Against the drought after 1981, the Botswana government distributed aid goods from foreign countries to those living in remote areas. Mostly maize flour was distributed, and also powdered milk and vegetable oil, though both in small quantities, were distributed.

1984

*Opening of school:* At the school, of which building were completed in 1983, three teachers arrived, and the primary school was formally opened. The number of pupils gradually increased; there were 125 pupils in September 1984. Six subjects were taught: English, Setswana, arithmetic, science, social studies, and religion. To avoid the hottest hours of the day, classes were held from 6:50 (later than that in the cool season, to avoid the cold hours early in the morning) until 11:30; and after that porridge of maize and sorghum was served as lunch.

*Opening of Medical Clinic:* A nurse was sent by a mission, and medical care became available every day except for Sundays. Pregnant women were served with maize porridge mixed with powdered milk and fat. Fixed time radio communication started with Gaborone and Ghanzi, and patients in grave conditions were transported to hospitals in towns by aircraft or four-wheel-drive ambulance.

*Promotion of goat raising:* As part of the agricultural promotion, three female goats were distributed to each family. Those who had had goats already did not receive the distribution. The distributed goats were not given but "loaned"; those who succeed in goat-raising are supposed to return three goats to the government later.

*Emergence of shops:* Botswana Craft Company supported set-up of a shop. A concrete-block building was constructed. Besides the initial fund of the shop, volunteers invested 5–10 pula each (1 pula = ca. 160 yen). The shop dealt in foods and everyday goods. The system was

Table 2. List of goods and their prices at the Botswana Craft Company shop (September 7, 1984).

Item	Price (pula)
Salad oil*	2.00
Soap*	0.80
Washing soap	0.50
Tooth paste*	?
Tea	0.50
Ground coffee*	0.25
Baking powder*	0.50
Salt	0.20
Lighter flint*	?
Wheat flour (1 kg)	0.80
Maize flour (1 kg)	0.60
Sugar (2 kg)	2.00
Vaseline	0.50
Match	0.03
Cigarette*	0.80
Candy	0.02
Nuts	0.10
Bubble gum	0.02
Soft drink	0.50
Knife	2.00
Cell (1.5 V, SUM-1)	0.30
Cell (9 V)*	?

\*Available at the time.

half cooperative. Botswana Craft Company issued coupons for the folk-art articles bought, and people could buy goods at the shop with the coupons. Table 2 lists the goods sold at the shop and their prices. Since no regular transportation was available, most goods were usually in short supply. The youth employed as the shopkeeper bought in lumbars and made desks, chairs, shelves, and boxes, which were also sold at the shop. In one corner of the shop, there was a sewing machine for women's free use. A merchant living at Ghantsi opened a thatched-hut shop at ≠Kade. He transported goods by his own small truck, and employed a Kgalagadi man. Although the goods were more expensive at his shop, his shop was popular because highly demanded goods such as maize flour, sugar, leaf tobacco, etc. were better stored. Another shop which emerged at ≠Kade was a bar. A woman came from the town of Maun 300 km northeast of Ghantsi. She began brewing wine. A 200 ml cup of unrefined wine was sold at 50 thebe (1 pula = 100 thebe).

*Construction of water supply system:* Since the old borehole did not supply enough water, another hole was bored 1 km southeast. The water supply system was under construction to link the two boreholes and tap water to several places in the settlement.

*Road construction:* The road between Ghantsi and ≠Kade was a bumping chain of meandering wheel tracks. It took 8 hours to travel only 150 km. For a better transportation route, road construction was started in 1983 due west from ≠Kade to link to the Ghantsi-Lobatse highway. Many of the ≠Kade inhabitants were employed as laborers for this road construction as well as the water system construction above.

These were the main external impacts which the San society in ≠Kade area faced after 1979. These sudden impacts greatly affected the life of the people who had lived with little intervention from the outside world. Let us look closer at their reactions to the changes derived by these impacts in the following sections.

## CHANGES IN THE LIFE

### Decline of the Gathering Activities

For the people who have lived most of the year relying on wild melons and roots to quench thirst, stable water supply from boreholes was the greatest factor to attract people. Construction of buildings, roads and water pipes gave them chances to obtain cash income. Free distribution of aid goods promoted sedentarization. School education, medical clinic, and opening of shops were other factors responsible for sedentarization. Although ≠Kade is situated in a remote area, it has not completely closed itself from the external world. Once or twice a year, forming a small group they traveled 150 km to towns and villages for visits and trade. Schools, hospitals, and shops they saw there were nothing but the symbols of the advanced outside world. It is difficult to surmise how much they understand the significance of school education or what they expect of it; however, they seem to sense vaguely that school education, at least, is necessary for entering the other world.

Thus a great number of people came around !Koi!kom borehole. As a result, an extraordinarily large settlement suddenly sprang up. I observed 330 people living there in December 1980. The number increased to 520 at the end of 1982 owing to the severe drought and free food distribution by the government. As the drought continued since then and various equipments were installed, the population did not decrease but stayed between 500 and 600 up to date.

Their traditional life, which was of a small group of 50–60 members moving frequently for search of food in a large area, collapsed, as a matter of fact, when the 500–600 people were concentrated at one place and began a sedentary life. Wild plants which they relied 80% of their food disappeared rapidly, and the people of #Kade were forced to depend on aid food. Many began to cultivate small gardens and planted maize, sorghum, beans and melon, but the laissez-faire farming relying on only a little, irregular rainfall produces only a little harvest, which can sustain life for only a few months after one rainy season. Some of those who received goat loans succeeded in breeding them into herds of more than 10 goats. However, the amount of milk they can obtain from such a herd is only a few cups a day, which is far from sustaining their subsistence but only supplementary.

The people get cash income by working as construction laborers and by selling folk-crafts and meat. Cash enables them to buy food such as maize flour, wheat flour and sugar, but actually most of the money they earn is spent for non-food goods such as horses, donkeys, tobacco and wine. Only a small amount goes for food. The main reason for it is that they can live with aid food and with the meat they obtain by hunting. Poor transportation system, though recently improved for transporting building materials and government officers between Ghantsi and #Kade, is another reason.

Gathering of wild plants which once sustained the San's living has declined, but still they have to collect firewood. Shortage of wood around !Koi!kom has become serious year after year, and now they are forced to go out as far as 3 km to collect wood. Besides firewood, they need materials to build fences to protect their gardens from animals and to build their own huts. Thus the trees near the settlement have been completely cut down, and desertification is rapid in progress. The increase of the goat population is another factor which accelerates this process. If the sedentary life continues, a large-scale destruction of nature will be inevitable.

#### From Bow-and-Arrow Hunting to Equestrian Hunting

The traditional bow-and-arrow hunting has been replaced by the group expedition hunting using horses. This is mainly because people now can buy horses comparatively easily owing to the increased cash income. Another reason is that bows and arrows are the important items that Botswana Craft Company buy from the people; thus they sold them away in the early period. This also hastened the decline of the bow-and-arrow hunting. Only a few men go for hunting with bows and arrows now, and these are the same men who still wear traditional skin loincloths.

Trap hunting and springhare hunting, which were also important for the San as subsidiary hunting, have almost completely died out. These hunting methods, which must be applied near residential areas, cannot be practiced where many people live. Also they feel no need to perform these when they can obtain enough meat by equestrian hunting. The men who still use these hunting methods are only a few old men.

Equestrian hunting is done by a group of several men with one or two horses and several donkeys. First they set up a hunting camp 40–50 km away from the settlement and use it as the base camp for hunting. The hunting camp is located where they can get water in the rainy season or where they can get juicy plants such as melon in the dry season. The man on the horse first searches for the game. When he finds new footprints, he traces them. Usually it takes two to three hours until he spots the game and kills it. If he has enough energy left, he chases it towards the settlement as much as possible so that the trouble of transportation can be saved.



After killing the game, the hunter goes back to the hunting camp and tells the waiting men where he spotted the game and asks them to fetch it. Then the men go with donkeys where the game was killed. After dismembering the kill into pieces at the spot, they take the meat back to the hunting camp. Then they cut the meat into smaller pieces and dry them under the sun. They continue hunting until they obtain enough meat (they usually kill five game in a five day expedition), but they do not stay more than a week even if they cannot get enough meat.

Equestrian hunting is normally organized by a team of five to ten men. The horse rider is the horse owner's son or brother in the age of twenties. The men who engage in hunting with him with donkeys are usually members of the same camp, though sometimes members of other camps may participate. Especially men of a camp in which nobody owns a horse often participate in the hunting of other camps so that they can get share of meat.

In the past, too, hunting of big game was done at places farther than where gathering and trap hunting were practiced. Now, as the result of concentrated population and severe competition over game, they have to go out even farther to find a game. Therefore the necessity of horses and donkeys for hunting became greater. Equestrian hunting is an excellent method, which seldom fails to kill the spotted game as long as the horse is in a good condition. One week of expedition always brings some result, which fundamentally differs from the unpredictable bow-and-arrow hunting.

The equestrian hunting is not new to the San. They learned it from the Kgalagadi in the old times and practiced it sometimes before 1979. I have stated "sometimes", because before 1979 horses were very rare in this district and it was very difficult to obtain a horse. Three men of halves with Kgalagadi used to keep 200-300 goats and they together bought a horse, which costed 100 goats. Or a lucky man trapped a leopard and changed its skin for a horse with a white farmer or an Indian merchant. A considerable number of horses were kept in Gyom area, where many Kgalagadi people lived, but in ≠Kade there used to be only a few horses. Often there was none because horses got hurt in hunting or eaten by lions.

There was also a problem of drinking water for horses before boreholes were installed. They used to rely on wild melons, but it was very hard to collect enough of them to water horses. Moreover, as the dry season proceeds, melons disappear and the horses have to be moved to sedentary villages with boreholes.

After 1979, with the increased chances of cash income acquisition, it became easier to buy horses. Since the wage for a laborer is 2.5 pula a day, a man can buy a horse if he works for three months in earnest. At the same time, the ample supply of water from the borehole made it easier to water horses. In 1982, there were 18 horses in ≠Kade area. Among them were included the horses brought from Gyom by the immigrants, but 10 or so of the rest were certainly bought in cash after the sedentary life began in 1979.

The decline of bow-and-arrow hunting and appearance of equestrian hunting can be more clearly seen if the amount of game obtained is compared. According to Osaki (1984), who was engaged in an investigation in ≠Kade area for five months from August 1982 to January 1983, 91 big game (eland, kudu, gemsbok, wildebeest, hartebeest, etc.) were killed during his stay, and most of them were killed in equestrian hunting. Only three were killed in bow-and-arrow hunting and only one was killed by spear with dogs.

Equestrian hunting is sometimes done in a day without making long expeditions. Since animals move around separately, some of them may happen to come near the settlement. When new footprints or sight of an animal is found, one or two men hurry to their horses pastured near the settlement and start chasing the game. The hunting process thereafter is the same as the expedition hunting. After killing the game, the hunter comes back to the

settlement and other men go out with donkeys to fetch the game. This type of hunting, which is highly chance-dependent, cannot be expected very often. Osaki (1984) reported that out of 22,800 kg of meat obtained by equestrian hunting in five months, 20,000 kg (88%) were obtained by expedition hunting. In other words, most meat is obtained by group hunting.

## CHANGE OF RESIDENTIAL PATTERN

The lifestyle of the San is obviously changing. Until very recently they moved about in a small group of 20–80 people every several weeks in a range of some 50 km<sup>2</sup> repeating fission and fusion. Now, they are settling to sedentary life. I use here the progressive form because still some of them temporarily leave the settlement for hunting and gathering, and because some groups go back to their homeland when food and water become abundant in the rainy season. There still remains the question: how many people will continue the sedentary life when the construction of buildings is over, the outsiders go away, the cash income becomes hard to obtain, and the free distribution of goods by the government is stopped?

Previously I wrote that the permanent population of ≠Kade is about 200 (Tanaka, 1980). At present, about 500–600 people live at !Koi!kom settlement; one half of them came from other than ≠Kade area. They can be largely grouped into three (Fig. 2): (1) Those who were born in ≠Kade area but had gone to live near the boreholes in Ghantsi farming area, and had led a life dependent on white farmers or as laborers there, and then came back to ≠Kade with their family when boreholes were installed. There are about 70 of them. They have the highest degree of contact with modern civilization. (2) Those who came from Gyom area,

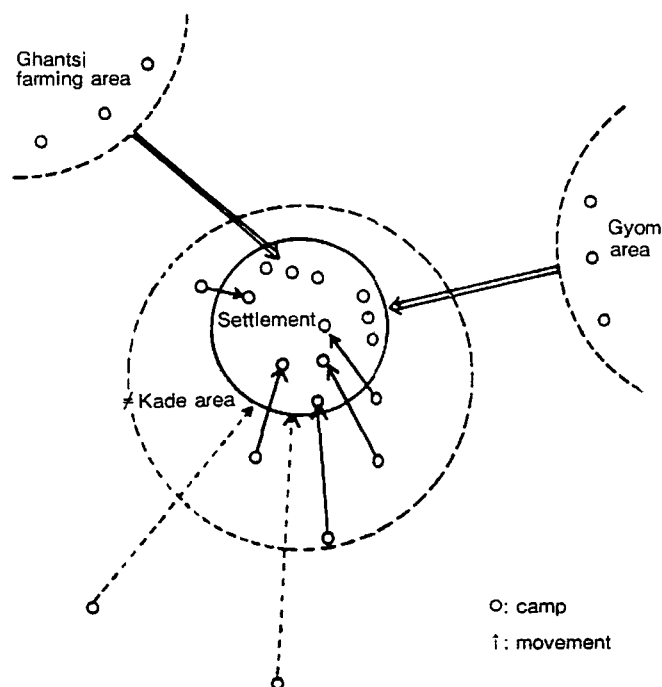


Fig. 2. Schematic diagram of the moves to the settlement.

where are comparatively large water pools. They are about 150 in number. Many Kgalagadi are included in them, and those who call themselves the San have mixed ancestries with the Kgalagadi. They have a strong attachment to Gyom and often go back there in the rainy season. (3) The rest, about 100 people, are those who were born in ≠Kade or have relatives there, but had been living south or southwest of ≠Kade and came back when the boreholes were installed.

These 500–600 people speak either of the similar //Gana and /Gwi languages. They are all basically hunting and gathering people, but some difference in sense can be recognized among these three groups. This is due to the slight difference in lifestyle according to the various degrees of contact with modern civilization and living in different environment until then. Also the sense of attribution seems to have grown up while living separately for a long time. Especially, for those who have continued to live in ≠Kade area, ≠Kade is their homeland. The San have little territorial exclusiveness and welcome whoever visit them, but permanent residence seems to be another matter.

The sedentarization and concentration of population may result in various kinds of social conflicts. Even at the time when some 200 people lived in ≠Kade area, they tended to split into small groups. Thus they maintained personal relationships and the permanency of their society by repeating fission and fusion. Now there are some 500 people living in the settlement within a limited area around the boreholes. How are they managing this fact?

Although people have come to live together in the vicinity of the boreholes, they did not intermingle with one another but maintained the residential group units of migratory life. Formerly the distances between camps were 10–20 km, but now are shortened to 100–500 m as they are concentrated in a small space. Nevertheless, each group occupied a distinctive area. Ghantsi group, though scattered in small groups, occupied the northeastern part of the settlement, while those who came from Kxaochwe occupied the southern part of the settlement. That is to say, people who once lived in an area of 100 km<sup>2</sup> came to live in an area of 1 km<sup>2</sup> without changing their relative positioning (Fig. 2). People became able to visit one another more easily than before, and there is no reason to leave their own camp to join others. The group structure has greatly lost its fluidity. Although living in separate camps, they have easy access to one another now. Youths, who are full of curiosity and adventurous spirits, seem to enjoy sedentary life with frequent visits to other camps to ask for food or to make friends of opposite sex. However, older men seldom make visits to other camps and tend to withdraw in their own camps more than before.

In 1976, a chief and three committee members were appointed among ≠Kade residents and the court system was introduced to solve problems. This system, however, does not function at all in the San society, where social harmony has been kept by everyday conversation and by fission of groups. At present, the San seem to manage themselves by maintaining their traditional residential pattern and by keeping egalitarianism without any ruler as far as possible.

## ACQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION OF MEAT

The efficiency of equestrian hunting as a means of obtaining meat is very high. However, this does not mean the increase of the total amount of meat they get. The annual amount of meat obtained in 1967–1968 by bow-and-arrow hunting was 5,605 kg for a camp of 50 people (Tanaka, 1980). As mentioned above, the amount of meat obtained during the five months of Osaki's (1984) study was 22,800 kg. Taking the present population at ≠Kade as 500, the

amount of meat obtained by equestrian hunting for 50 people for a year can be calculated as:  $22,800 \times 12/5 \times 50/500 = 5,472$  kg. In other words, the amount of meat obtained by equestrian hunting is quite similar to that obtained by bow-and-arrow hunting. They do not hunt more than they need even after they come to employ equestrian hunting. Their Epicurean spirit of gatherers—i.e., one takes no more than one need, keeps no reserve, takes only when one need—still remains as their philosophy of life. Deep belief in nature is the basis of hunter-gatherers. This attitude towards nature is rooted in their way of life completely fused with nature. This also has functioned as a genuine nature conservation. This is why they could sustain their life so long buried in nature. They say, "We kill animals whenever we find them," but they instinctively know that needless hunting destroys the foundation of their life.

The total amount of meat obtained did not increase with the change of hunting method. However, the distribution of meat has greatly changed. Even in the past, small animals such as springhare, guinea fowl, tortoise and vegetable foods were not shared but eaten within each household, while the game bigger than steenbok were distributed among the members of the same camp.

The change is most clearly seen for the dried meat acquired by equestrian hunting. The reasons which caused the change in distribution are as follows: (1) their idea that the meat belongs to the owner of the hunting tools, i.e. the owner of the horse in equestrian hunting; (2) commercialization of meat due to the consumption by officers, construction staff and teachers; (3) promoted commercialization of the well-preserved dried meat; and (4) concentration of population.

Formerly when meat of an animal was brought to the camp of 50 people once a month on an average, it was eaten in a day or two and there was no leftover nor time to make dried meat. On the other hand, by equestrian hunting, they get four to five game in one hunting expedition. Thus the meat can be left for dried meat. They sell much of it to get cash income. Since the San regard that meat belongs to the owner of the hunting tools, if bows and arrows are used for hunting, meat belongs to the owner of the arrow, and in equestrian hunting, meat belongs to the owner of the horse. In addition, the San think, as Osaki (1984) pointed out, that the things of external world which they buy with money are out of their norms of possession and distribution. This applies not only to horses but also to other items such as clothes and sugar. Thus they think that the meat they acquire by a horse, which is bought with cash or goats, is special and needs not to be shared with other members of the camp, while still both the owner and the expectant have a strong traditional notion that one should share with others what one has. These two contradictory ideologies constantly confront in the process of distribution.

The concentration of over 500 people in the vicinity of boreholes made the problem even worse. In the past when people lived separately in small groups, they could share with other members of the same camp, though unwillingly, even the things they bought with money. For example, they shared the wine made from sugar bought with money, although grumbling, "Since this sugar is bought with money, I don't want to share." By contrast, today it is impossible to share with all the members of the camp.

When a news spreads that meat has been obtained, people gather from various camps, which became nearer than before. Basically give-and-take of things can be reduced to the individual relationship between two persons. One can predict whether meat is divided for him or not from his nearness of kinship, intimacy with the other, and from the give-and-take in the past. If he is not sure to be given meat, he remains at his camp and waits for those

who luckily get some. If he dares to go and ask for meat when it is unlikely to be given, both he and the man asked for will be in bad moods, which may last thereafter.

Even though equestrian hunting is an excellent method, it is impossible to obtain meat enough to satisfy all members of the settlement by one hunt. Moreover, since much of the meat is sold to get cash income, distribution must be limited within small groups. Also from the viewpoint of the horse owner, i.e. the owner of meat, sharing does not pay, because he cannot expect returns from those who do not have horses. In the past, when they hunted with bows and arrows, everyone had somehow equal chances to supply meat. Egalitarianism stands on equal chances. It functions provided that everybody can supply meat not necessarily now but some day. One way flow of distribution did not exist in their society. Both giver and receiver will be embarrassed if one of them always remains the receiver.

## CONFLICTING IDEAS OF TIME AND VALUE

### Alcohol and Violence

Originally alcohol did not exist in hunter-gatherer societies. The San seem to have learned brewing from the Bantu, but the material necessary for brewing, such as water, honey and fruits, are obtainable only seasonally in their land. Thus, the chance to make and enjoy alcoholic beverages was very rare. As the water supply began and sugar became easy to get, the habit of drinking alcohol rapidly spread, which caused various social problems. As they do not have the idea of reservation, they drink to the last drop. As they do not have any idea of regimentation of time, such as the annual agricultural calendar of farmers or the daily schedule of herdsmen, they drink whenever they want. In short, they do not have a manner of drinking in any sense. Even after becoming to get income cash, few save it for buying a horse or donkey. They say they will buy a horse next time with the money they earn, but actually they spend most of their money on fancy clothes, sugar for brewing, or good knives. Also very often, they buy things in advance expecting next salaries. Consequently they have to spend most of their income for paying their debts. The sugar they obtain in this way is used for making wine, which they drink, whenever they want, to the last drop.

Emergence of the bar worsened the condition. Unable to resist to the attraction of alcohol, some of them come in front of the bar waiting for chances to cadge someone. They say, "Give me 50 thebe. I will buy a cup of drink with it," or "I am not asking you for a drink, but asking the distribution of some money since you have much." In these words, we can see both the logic of traditional equal distribution and the logic of monetary economics.

The San are not strong drinkers. Many get drunk with a little weak alcohol. When they get drunk, they start speaking in loud voices with red faces. When drunk, they cannot work. Our servant used to get drunk while he was on duty and often made troubles. We often told him not to drink during the work hours, but he came to our camp red from morning several days later. It seems very difficult for them to abstain from alcohol when everyone else around is drinking.

The biggest problem caused by alcoholism is violence. In the San society, theft and violence are the two worst problems. These social evils are controlled by neither any political power nor any judicial system but by the common sense and conscience of each individual. Although they relieve themselves by singing and dancing, they are suppressed because of being demanded to be modest and humble in their personal relationships. Freed by the effect of alcohol, their suppression seems to spout out all at once. On drinking, they begin to abuse one another and easily break out into violence. Since they are gentle and controlled in everyday

behavior, counteraction may be greater when intoxicated. Being hunters by nature, in the past, even for a joke they never pointed their spears or knives at other persons, but today they sometimes use them in fights after drinking, which frequently result in fatal wounds. Most of the people who were carried to the clinic or hospitals were wounded in that way.

The problem of alcoholism in hunter-gatherer societies is not new; there have been the well-known examples of the Eskimos and the American Indians. The San are confronted with the same crisis now. It is impossible to stop the inflow of alcohol. A manner of drinking is urgently needed to be established, although that may require the San to convert their most fundamental value.

#### Quarrels and a Trial

On the afternoon of October 21, 1984, a youth jumped into our camp out of breath. Five young men came running after him and more after them. The first youth grabbed a piece of firewood from our wood stock. Though unable to understand the circumstance at the time, I took the wood piece away from him as I sensed that a quarrel happened. The young men who followed surrounded him, and one of them wearing heavy shoes kicked him, while the others beat him by hands. Some women who came after them intervened and the fight was over for the time, for he ran towards his parents' camp. This youth, 18 years old, was a /Gwi immigrated from Ghantsi. He fell in love with a girl, half of /Gwi and Kgalagadi, and was staying at her camp. The girl, 15 years old, was a primary school pupil. The five young men who chased him were Kgalagadi immigrants from Gyom. They came to the /Gwi camp intoxicated and they made the youth a victim of the day. The reason for the quarrel was that the /Gwi youth slept with a girl of half Kgalagadi blood, which was unpleasant to the Kgalagadi young men. However, reasons were unimportant for the drunken young men. Clearly this was not only a love affair case but also a reflection of conflicts among different groups: the original inhabitants of ≠Kade, the immigrants from Gyom, and the immigrants from Ghantsi. Suppressed emotions of daily life seem to have spouted out in this case.

The original inhabitants of ≠Kade do not think well of Ghantsi immigrants who sleep with their girls. However, in the case above they and the Ghantsi immigrants went together to the Kgalagadi camp to negotiate. They talked for an hour, but could not reach an agreement. They decided to bring the case to the court. They requested the court to be opened. The chief was unwilling, since there was no one wounded in the fight nor the case seemed important. They pressed the court to be opened, and at last the court was decided to be opened a week later. The trial lasted from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. About 200 people gathered to watch the trial. The school mistress and RADP officers were present among them. In the middle of them, the chief and the committee members sat. The witnesses were called one after another. Each described the process of the quarrel and added his/her own opinion. The parties to the case re-acted the quarrel. They spoke one by one, which took more time than usual conversations. There were many repetitions and personal opinions; and the discussions seemed unconstructive. The trial, after all, was held to enlarge the everyday conversations and give some form to them; thus it seemed to me. Finally the school mistress stood up and said that she would gather her pupils next Saturday and tell them she would whip such a primary school girl who sleeps with a man. A committee member also made a speech about the vice of violence and told the people there not to make such a trouble again. The five young men were dismissed without punishment or fine, since there was no one hurt in the case. They may have been punished enough by being blamed in the public.

Neither the chief nor the committee members had any power to lead the trial. Nor had the

people any thought to entrust these officially appointed leaders with any authority. They have not been immersed in the idea of chieftainship or trial.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

With the sedentarization and concentration of population, the San's life seems to have changed. However, the change is only superficial mainly in the people's clothes and the size of their settlement. In a closer look, we can see that their ideas of values or behavioral patterns have not been greatly changed. As easily seen, contact with the external world will never cease but will be accelerated. They will have to adjust and adapt flexibly to the new circumstances.

The destruction of flora around the residential area proceed as long as the sedentarization and concentration of people continue. Increase of livestock will accelerate the process. Sanitation of residential areas is also problematical. John Marshall (personal communication) has already pointed out this problem in Nyae Nyae region in Namibia. When roads are improved and transportation becomes easy, and when government intervenes more than now, goods flow in and monetary economics will penetrate into their society. Then the egalitarianism based on reciprocity will be shaken from its bottom. If the ideas such as labor and payment, working time and leisure time are established in their society, their manner of drinking alcohol could be improved. There would be another problem, then. When they learn planning and saving, they will buy more horses. The increase of horses may lead to excessive hunting. Their way of life have to be re-examined from its roots. Is there no way but to seek long perspectives in goat-herding and rainfall agriculture? The growth of mining industry by the Botswana government will affect their life. The Botswana government plans to divide the Reserve into two parts, south and north, leaving the northern half as it is, and free the southern half for the San. In the changing circumstances, how long can they continue their hunting life?

Aid activity against starvation, which is a worldwide movement now, is also problematical. In #Kade area there was a case that people did not go for hunting for a month after the distribution of aid food and lived solely on the distributed maize flour. Among agriculturalists, too, there were many villages which were abandoned of cultivation. As often has been pointed out, charity activities sometimes deprive people of self-dependence and motivation to work. Many aid programs should be reconsidered to be replaced with more appropriate ways of aid suitable for the lifestyle and social system of each community.

The San selectively and flexibly adapt to the internal and external circumstances, and reintegrate themselves. However, if modernization of the San society is possible only by eradicating their traditional adaptive life, which was once so perfectly fused with nature and kept harmony with it, there are too many problems without easy solutions.

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